



National Adult Safeguarding Board: terms of reference

Purpose

The National Adult Safeguarding Board (the board) will:

- provide transparent national leadership on serious adult safeguarding issues
- support greater accountability across government and the wider system
- drive learning and improvement across local safeguarding systems

Bringing together people with lived experience, sector leaders and safeguarding professionals, the board will provide support and challenge to strengthen national oversight of adult safeguarding to promote equity, dignity and human rights.

Functions

The board will focus on action to embed learning and foster a person-focused approach to safeguarding that seeks to improve outcomes for adults who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

The work of the board will be rooted in people's lived experience and mechanisms to ensure this will be developed.

The board will undertake the following functions:

- oversee an urgent review of adult safeguarding legislation, including:
 - work to update the [Care and Support Statutory guidance](#) on safeguarding

- whether a statutory requirement should be introduced for local authorities (LA) to escalate SARs to national level and criteria for escalation
- whether the board should be placed on a statutory footing, and what its future relationship with government should be
- review the proposed cross-government response to Escalated Safeguarding Adults Reviews (ESARs) developed via the Adult Safeguarding Challenge Group¹, and agree actions arising from each ESAR
- drive improved data collection around adult safeguarding, including on safeguarding enquiries carried out under s42 of the [Care Act 2014](#) (the Care Act) and on Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) carried out under s44 of the Care Act
- develop a public profile and ensure that its work is carried out as transparently as possible to build public confidence in the system

The board will keep its priorities and workplan under review to remain focused on the issues of greatest significance to adults who may be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

Membership and secretariat

The board will comprise the following members:

- Sarah McClinton (Chair), Chief Social Worker for Adults, DHSC
- Acosia Nyanin, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer for England, NHS England
- Chris Badger, Chief Inspector of Adult Social Care and Integrated Care, Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Vic Rayner, Chief Executive Officer, National Care Forum
- Tamara Cooper, Adult Safeguarding Lead, National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)

¹ The Adult Safeguarding Challenge Group, chaired by the Director General for Adult Social Care, is to review Escalated Safeguarding Adults Reviews (ESARs)

- Michael Preston-Shoot, Joint Convenor National Network for Safeguarding Adults Board Chairs
- Melanie Williams, Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Public Health, Nottinghamshire County Council
- Lucy Rush, Principal Social Worker/Director of Practice and Assurance, Hertfordshire County Council. Chair of National Principal Social Worker Network
- Isaac Samuels, Co-chair of the National Co-production Advisory Group (NCAG) and the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) Board
- Clenton Farquharson, Associate Director (Policy and Influencing), Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)
- Anthony Douglas, former CEO of Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) and Director of Adult Social Services. Current Safeguarding Adults Board chair, Department for Education (DfE) Children's Commissioner, government advisor on child and adult safeguarding in Bermuda

Members collectively bring a balance of skills, expertise and experience relevant to adult safeguarding, including policy, operational delivery, inspection and lived or professional experience of safeguarding practice.

The board is supported by a secretariat function, provided by the DHSC safeguarding policy team, responsible for:

- preparing and circulating agendas and papers
- recording minutes and agreed actions
- coordinating follow-up activity
- supporting the effective operation of the board

The secretariat can be contacted at ascadultsafeguarding@dhsc.gov.uk.

Confidentiality and information-sharing

All materials and information shared with the board are confidential, unless otherwise stated. However, members are able to discuss broad issues with relevant colleagues to inform discussion at the board. Minutes detailing decisions and actions from each board meeting will be circulated to board members, whilst non-attributable minutes and outcomes will be and made public. Members will not disclose information or written material (such as agendas, minutes, discussion papers or other documents) to other parties, unless otherwise directed by the chair

Information-sharing will be conducted in line with relevant legal and governance requirements, including data protection obligations.

Meetings

The board will meet quarterly for 2 hours. Meetings will take place either in person with a hybrid attendance option, or virtually via Microsoft Teams, as determined by the chair. The chair may convene additional meetings as necessary.

Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the board is 50%, including the chair.

Reporting

The board is chaired by the Chief Social Worker and is directly accountable to the Minister of State for Care (MSC).

The existing DHSC Challenge Group will continue to meet and report to the board.

Communications

The board will work as transparently as possible so that people can see that lessons are identified, shared and acted upon in response to serious adult safeguarding issues.

To this end, the board will:

- establish a page on GOV.UK, containing details of its membership and terms of reference, with a summary of the issues discussed at each board meeting and decisions taken
- issue an annual communication from the Chief Social Worker to the sector setting out key learning, expectations and priorities arising from the board's work
- work with Partners for Care and Health at the Local Government Association (LGA) to develop other engagement opportunities, such as webinars on the board's work

Review of terms of reference

These terms of reference will be reviewed within one year of the board's first meeting, and annually thereafter for as long as the board remains in operation. Any amendments to the terms of reference will be agreed by the board.